



STRATEGIC PLAN

Sustainable Rice Platform e.V. *"From Vision to the Field"*

2021-2025

(Approved by SRP Board 9 December 2020)



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES IN THE GLOBAL RICE SECTOR	4
3.	OVERVIEW OF THE SUSTAINABLE RICE PLATFORM	5
3.1	<i>Who we are</i>	5
3.2	<i>Vision, mission and strategic goal</i>	5
3.3	<i>Organization and governance</i>	6
3.4	<i>Membership</i>	6
3.5	<i>How can SRP contribute?</i>	7
3.6	<i>SRP tools</i>	8
3.7	<i>SRP’s value proposition</i>	9
4.	STRATEGY 2021 – 2025	11
4.1	<i>Planning process</i>	11
4.2	<i>Three strategic pillars</i>	11
4.3	<i>Three roles for SRP</i>	12
5.	ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	16
5.1	<i>New organizational structure</i>	16
6.	A BUSINESS PLAN FOR SRP	18
6.1	<i>SRP revenue streams</i>	18
6.2	<i>Long-term financial sustainability</i>	24
6.3	<i>Income 2021-2025</i>	25
6.4	<i>Implementation costs</i>	25
	ANNEX 1: SUMMARY OF SRP STRATEGIC PLAN	27
	ANNEX 2: SRP BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS	28
	ANNEX 3: UPSCALING IMPACT: ROLES, CRITERIA AND MODALITIES FOR SRP PARTICIPATION IN GRANT PROJECTS ..	29

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Farmer segmentation- Reaching 1 million.....	6
Figure 2: Breakdown of membership by constituency	7
Figure 3: SRP Toolbox.....	8
Figure 4: SRP roles and comparative advantage.....	15
Figure 5: SRP Organizational Chart	16
Figure 6: DeveloPPP.de project work packages to support the Secretariat	17
Figure 7: Income projection 2021-2025.....	25

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Revenue Stream 1 - Annual membership fees.....	21
Table 2: Revenue Stream 2 - Authorized Training Scheme.....	22
Table 3: Revenue Stream 3 - Assurance Scheme	23
Table 4: Revenue Stream 4 - Strategic scaling projects (grants).....	23
Table 5: Income streams 2021-2025.....	25
Table 6: Costs and assumptions.....	26

1. Introduction

This strategic plan provides a roadmap for implementing and managing the SRP's strategic direction over the coming five years. The plan serves a number of purposes. First it provides focus, direction and action in order to transform and develop the SRP from its current stage of development to achieve its vision, mission and ambition over the 5-year period. Second, the strategic plan provides a framework for prioritizing resources (time, money and people) to scale up impact and ensure organizational stability in the longer term, and to build and sustain relevance to its key stakeholders. Third, the Strategic Plan represents a crucial tool for communicating the direction of the organization to staff, its institutional members and the external stakeholder community.

The Strategic Plan incorporates a Business Plan for Year 1 that defines key revenue-generating activities and estimates costs and revenues for SRP's operations over the first year, as well as indicative projections extending beyond the current period of BMZ support under DeveloPPP.de (2020-2023) to the five-year planning horizon. It also sets targets for revenue generation for the end of the 5-year cycle (2025). The Plan also addresses the need for SRP to re-evaluate its funding structure and move towards a fully self-funded basis.

Together, the SRP's strategic and business objectives are important prerequisites to offer a Value Proposition with a high level of transparency and clarity to potential members, investors, partners and donors. It is also important to recognize the Strategic Plan as a living document, with organizational agility as the key to adaptation to changing external circumstances. The document will therefore be subject to annual review.

2. Sustainability challenges in the global rice sector

Rice is integral to global food systems. Worldwide, 3.5 billion people consume rice and 144 million family farmers produce rice on approximately 160 million hectares. Some 90 percent of rice farmers live near or below the poverty line - many are women.

Globally, 144 million smallholder rice farmers rely on rice production for food and household income; nearly 95 percent of Asian rice is traded and consumed domestically. Production is highly fragmented, dominated by flows of South-South bulk trade with a smaller number of relatively well-coordinated South-North and North-North supply chains. In addition, rice is a strategic staple crop of extreme public and political importance.

However, despite its critical importance to livelihoods, national economies and global food security, rice production remains highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including flooding, drought, salinization, sea-level rise and increased temperatures.

Rice smallholders, especially women, bear the brunt of the health and economic risks of production as they are inadequately equipped to safeguard their livelihood against climate change impacts and market risks. If we do not act now, today's children will live in a severely degraded environment and many of them will remain within the poverty trap in rice.

As our population grows, so does demand for rice. The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) estimates that rice production must increase by at least 25 percent in the next 25 years to meet future global demand. Meeting this growing demand sustainably poses an enormous challenge in a world with finite resources. Annual water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions of rice top the charts among food crops. Rice cultivation uses approximately 40 percent of the world's irrigated water, and accounts for 10 percent of global methane emissions.

Sustainable rice production requires economically viable, environmentally sound and socially beneficial farming systems across diverse social and production contexts. But it is possible to develop an overarching framework encompassing proven approaches and climate-smart best practices that can be generally applied, to offer a path for producers, value chain actors and governments to drive transformative change across the sector. Achieving such an ambition requires not change not only at farm level; collaboration and a shared vision are required among all value chain actors and the support of governments, the financial sector, research, civil society and international development community.

3. Overview of the Sustainable Rice Platform

3.1 Who we are

The (SRP) is a global multi-stakeholder alliance comprising 109 institutional members from public, private, research, civil society and the financial sector. The SRP initiative was originally co-convened in 2011 by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH (GIZ) and was registered in January 2020 as an independent not-for-profit member association.

SRP works with partners to transform the global rice sector by improving smallholder livelihoods, reducing the social, environmental and climate footprint of rice production; and by offering the global rice market an assured supply of sustainably produced rice.

3.2 Vision, mission and strategic goal

SRP's primary purpose is to catalyze public-private action to accelerate rice sustainability – through efforts to help farmers prosper, empower rice-growing communities, respect human rights, and conserve the environment. The initiative champions multi-stakeholder partnerships, aligned public and private investment, policy dialogue, financial sector partnerships, knowledge sharing and other activities pivotal to achieving global rice sector transformation.

Our vision is to “Feed the world. Sustainably”, transforming the global rice sector through an alliance that links research, production, policy making, trade and consumption. The vision articulates a new norm in rice, where the sector delivers healthy, high-quality, nutritious rice to consumers, helps farmers achieve better lives, and protects the environment.

Our mission is to catalyze global rice sector transformation by developing tools and mobilizing rice stakeholders to promote on-farm adoption of sustainable best practice, link farmers to markets and offer an objective normative basis for policymaking.

Our goal is to reach one million farmers¹ adopting climate-smart, sustainable best practice by 2022- by developing tools to promote on-farm adoption of proven technologies; by linking farmers to markets; and by supporting market actors with tools to support sustainable procurement, de-risk their supply chains and communicate achievements transparently.

¹ In this context, this target refers to farmers participating directly or indirectly in SRP activities. Farmer segmentation per type of activity is presented in Figure 1.

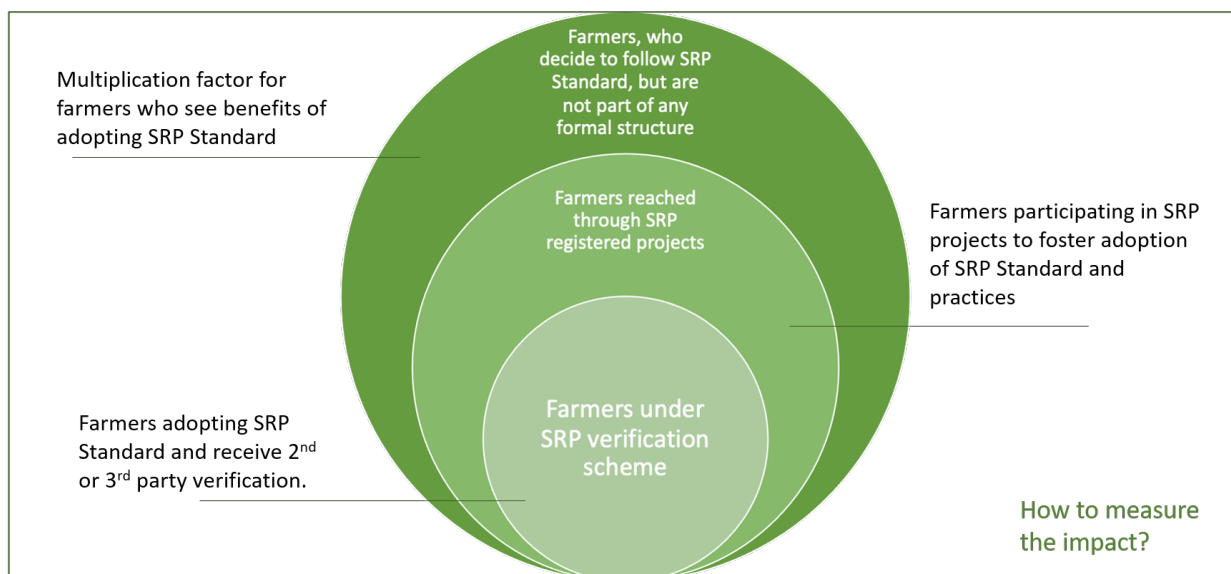


Figure 1: Farmer segmentation- Reaching 1 million

3.3 Organization and governance

SRP is incorporated under German law as a not-for-profit member-based international association (eingetragener Verein, or e.V.). SRP operates under statutory Articles of Association (amendable by the General Assembly) and Bylaws (amendable by Board resolution).

The primary authority of members is exercised through the Annual General Assembly of members, while three functional entities carry out the business of the organisation; the Executive Board (elected by the General Assembly), the SRP Secretariat (located in Bangkok) and the Executive Director, who manages the Secretariat. A Technical Committee oversees implementation of the SRP Standard, Performance Indicators and the SRP Assurance Scheme. The SRP Executive Board recently established two new Board-level Committees: A Governance and Risk Committee, and a Resource Mobilization Committee. The Executive Board may also establish ad hoc Task Forces for a prescribed duration to address specific issues/tasks.

Multi-stakeholder governance is at the core of the SRP System. This means SRP seeks to ensure all SRP stakeholders have an equal voice and an equal and transparent opportunity to influence decisions and outcomes in respect to SRP’s policies and operations, and in respect to the design and management of SRP’s normative tools including the SRP Standard, Performance Indicators and Assurance Scheme. SRP seeks to operate by consensus as an ISEAL-compliant standard system, where decisions represent a balance of stakeholder interests. These principles of multi-stakeholder governance and consensus do not mean that every stakeholder will be equally satisfied by every decision the organization makes. ISEAL defines consensus as “general agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important stakeholder group”.

3.4 Membership

Full membership is open to any organizations that support the SRP’s goals. Members are categorized into four broad constituencies that reflect diverse stakeholder interests and perspectives:

1. **Public sector** – comprised of organizations that are owned, operated and mandated by the government or multi-government agreements such as national agencies, UN and other inter-governmental organizations and research institutions.

2. **Supply chain actors** – refer to any organization within the rice supply chain from production, processing and distribution, including producer organizations, upstream supply chain actors, business associations and retailers.
3. **Service and equipment providers** – include commercial organizations that are indirectly involved in the rice supply chain, such as input providers, equipment manufacturers, ICT service providers, consultancy groups, certification bodies, as well as insurance and financial service providers.
4. **Civil society organizations** – are any non-government and non-profit organization, which serves and represents a wide range of public interests, including advocacy groups and grassroots community-based organizations.

Current membership has grown rapidly and as of November 2020, stands at 109 institutional members. Figure 2 provides a breakdown of membership by constituency.

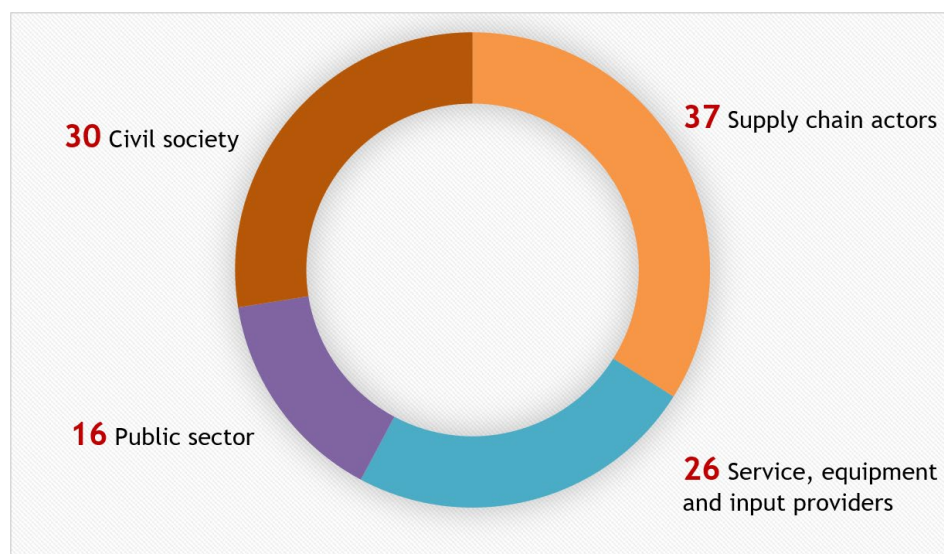


Figure 2: Breakdown of membership by constituency

3.5 How can SRP contribute?

SRP has comparative advantages to participate and lead in multiple ways. Through its Executive Board, Secretariat and membership network, SRP is well-positioned to offer or facilitate a range of potential services to its members and the international development community:

1. **Normative tools:** Provide a widely accepted and credible framework, guidance and support for upscaling adoption of environmentally and socially sustainable and gender-balanced, climate-smart rice production technologies under the SRP Standard to governments, implementation partners and farmers.
2. **Capacity building:** Provide guidance, authorized training and technical assistance for upscaling of adoption of environmentally and socially sustainable, climate-smart rice production technologies under the SRP Standard and Performance Indicators, and to extension services, implementation partners and farmers.
3. **Value chain development:** Raise awareness of sustainable rice among supply chain actors including retail, and encourage their involvement in promoting and sourcing rice grown in line with SRP practices in order to help SRP farmers with market access .

4. **Policy advocacy:** Contribute to development of rice policy measures to incentivize adoption of climate-smart sustainable best practice among rice growers, particularly smallholders, including landscape-level approaches. SRP National Chapters can serve to foster national-level commitment among national-level rice stakeholders from research, public and private sectors as well as civil society and the development community. Policy advocacy will align SRP interventions with national agricultural policies and incentive structures e.g. to enhance farmer livelihoods, meet NDC commitments under the Paris Climate Change Agreement as well as national policies for food and water security.
5. **Monitoring & impact:** Provide common frameworks for M&E to monitor SRP adoption and its impact, including local impacts on productivity, water consumption/quality, soil conditions, biodiversity and ecosystem services, based on the SRP Performance Indicators.
6. **Scaling partners:** Serve to anchor public-private partnerships as a basis for bilateral and multilateral initiatives.
7. **Gatekeeper:** Serve to authenticate green investments in rice, and promote collateralization of the SRP Standard as a means of adding value to, and derisking financial services e.g. credit and crop insurance.

3.6 SRP tools

SRP offers the global rice supply chain a set of instruments (or tools) to support large-scale adoption of sustainable, climate-smart best practices among rice smallholders. SRP tools (Figure 3) are designed throughout in a collaborative process involving key stakeholders, and are regularly updated.

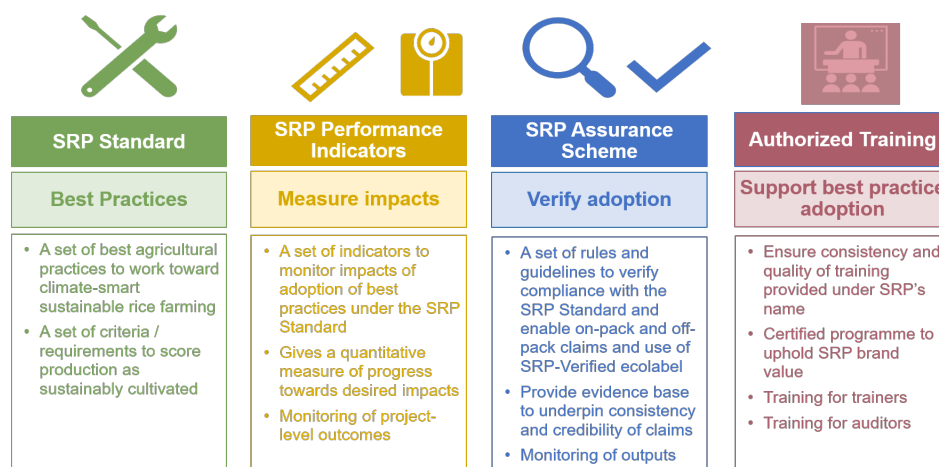


Figure 3: SRP Toolbox

- The **SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation** is the world's first voluntary sustainability standard for rice production. Launched in 2015, the Standard is now in Version 2.1. The availability of the Standard triggered commitments by a number of private sector actors to achieve 100% sustainable sourcing within their global corporate supply chains. Pilot field implementation of the SRP Standard in 2016-17 was evaluated by IRRI, revealing real benefits to rice farmers and the environment in multiple production environments. These included up to 20% savings in water use, 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and 10-20% increase in farmer's incomes.
- The SRP Standard is complemented by the **SRP Performance Indicators**, a set of 12 quantitative indicators used to monitor the impacts of adopting climate-smart best practices

and other field interventions. Together, the SRP Standard and Performance Indicators provide the scientific and technical underpinning for the SRP Assurance Scheme, and in providing a broadly-accepted working definition of sustainability in rice together with a framework for quantifying impact, enable benchmarking and objective comparison of the sustainability of any rice system and a normative basis for policymaking.

- **SRP Authorized Training Providers** are institutions endorsed by the SRP Secretariat under an agreed protocol, mandated to develop and deliver certified SRP Authorized Training Courses on SRP's behalf, to build a cadre of qualified trainers qualified to conduct training, verification, or other activities in support of Registered SRP Projects, SRP Members, and other SRP stakeholders following the SRP Training System. Currently SRP has accredited three Authorized Training Providers:
 - GIZ Academy of International Cooperation (AIZ)
 - GLOBALG.A.P.
 - International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).
- **SRP Assurance Scheme:** The SRP Assurance Scheme defines rules for actors engaged in measuring compliance or demonstrating improvements, providing demonstrable evidence of compliance with the SRP Standard and the use of SRP trademarks (Claims, Logos or Label) upon achieving assurance. The SRP Assurance Scheme focuses on verification, is built on a strong internal assessment and provides registration and self-assessment as a starting point. The SRP Assurance Scheme encourages innovative remote/landscape assessments, participatory schemes, individual producer assessments and producer group schemes using Internal Management Systems (IMS).
- The Scheme offers three levels of assurance to support a broad range of users, all of which require registration on the SRP farm database. Clients are free to opt for the level that best suits their needs and resources:
 - Level 1: Self-assessment
 - Level 2: Second party verification
 - Level 3: Third party verification.

The Scheme is managed by GLOBALG.A.P. as SRP's Assurance Service Provider (ASP), in compliance with the ISEAL Alliance Assurance Code of Good Practice, in order to implement all aspects of the Scheme including farmer registration, auditor training, verification audits, shadow audits, database management and promotion of the Scheme to retailers and other downstream actors in key markets. GLOBALG.A.P. is mandated as SRP's sole ASP until 31 December 2021 under a contractual agreement, and reports to the SRP Technical Committee. GLOBALG.A.P. is also responsible for authorizing and training Verification Bodies to conduct SRP audits; at present two Verification Bodies (VBs) have been approved to conduct SRP audits (Preferred by Nature and Agrocolor) with Control Union under assessment.

3.7 SRP's value proposition

SRP is unique in its role as a global multi-stakeholder platform, convener and thought leader in sustainable rice development, with over 100 members including UN and inter-governmental agencies, governments, private sector actors, NGOs, governmental organizations and research institutions. Its value proposition can be summarized as:

- a) Delivering services,
- b) Convening partnerships and
- c) Leveraging impacts.

Additional factors that enhance SRP's value proposition are listed as follows:

- A diverse multi-stakeholder platform with over 100 members from the private, public and development sectors, with a shared vision to transform the global rice sector.
- Commitment from SRP members to support, implement and drive wide scale adoption of the SRP Standard.
- A comprehensive set of widely-accepted normative tools (Standard, Indicators, Training System, Assurance Scheme, IMS Standard and Chain of Custody Standard) to support implementation of climate-smart sustainable best practice among rice smallholders.
- Unilateral equivalence of SRP Standard compliance with other systems Member willingness to collaborate on joint initiatives to advance the sustainable rice agenda (opportunities to participate in large-scale strategic projects).
- Clear linkages to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and a wider international development agenda on sustainable food systems.
- A compelling business case to unlock public and private finance: SRP can demonstrate the impact of adoption of best practices as advocated under the SRP Standard.

4. Strategy 2021 – 2025

4.1 Planning process

A major strategic transformation is needed if SRP is to achieve its ambitious vision and leverage opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the global development agenda through the SDGs. Collaborative approaches will be critically important; SRP will need to work with multiple partners to drive scale and transform the global rice sector to embrace sustainable, climate-smart best practice.

This 5-year Strategic Plan follows a series of stakeholder consultations whose outcomes are recorded in the following documents:

- SRP Business Model 2013
- Strategic Plan 2016
- Strategic Visioning Exercise 2018
- Draft Business Model 2020

An additional round of externally facilitated consultations involving members of the Executive Board and other stakeholders (GIZ, GLOBALG.A.P.) took place in September-October 2020. A total of 14 stakeholder interviews were conducted to understand expectations, test assumptions and develop broad-brush financial projections. The findings emerging from responses to these interviews were presented as a draft Business Model to the Executive Board during a strategic planning session in October 2020. A summary of the Business Model canvas is provided in Annex 2.

The interviews focused upon respondents' perspectives on 5 main questions:

- How would you describe the relevance of SRP to your organization needs?
- What are the services that SRP is the best placed to deliver in order to fulfil its strategic agenda?
 - SRP Verification (on a profit-sharing basis with Global GAP)
 - SRP Authorized Training Programme for external training providers
 - SRP Authorized Training Delivery
 - SRP Strategic Scaling Projects
- What actual or potential opportunities can you identify to advance these services?
- What actual or potential barriers can you identify that would limit advancement of these services?
- What can SRP do to be more useful to your organization?

Building on the findings of these inquiries, the SRP Strategic Plan 2021-2025 sets out the rationale and approach for a scalable process to reach one million rice smallholders through collaborative efforts both among members and through external partnerships. The plan draws lessons from the experience of other successful platforms in setting a clear common agenda, establishing shared measurement systems, financial projections and mutually reinforcing activities, and ensuring continuous communication with the support of backbone support organizations.

4.2 Three strategic pillars

SRP's vision, mission and goals require a cross-cutting, collaborative approach to leveraging resources across the stakeholder community and driving transformative change. With interventions needed from farm to policy level, the following three strategic pillars provide an overarching framework for action.

1. **Develop sustainable value chains:** This strategy leverages emerging opportunities to de-risk supply chains through innovation and technology convergence. The SRP Assurance Scheme is based on the SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation, underpinned by proven best practices and provides a science-based process to assess compliance and drive impact. Employing best practices in rice farming can reduce water use by up to 20% and methane emissions from flooded rice fields by up to 50%. The ‘SRP-Verified’ on-pack ecolabel allows consumers to choose sustainable rice. By stocking SRP-verified rice, retailers can make significant and measurable contributions to sustainability commitments and climate change targets. Industry actors will also be able to de-risk their supply chains and ensure stability by sourcing through SRP-verified suppliers, while farmers will adapt to meet an emerging market dynamic.
2. **Create partnerships and incentives for scale:** Having established a robust scientific rationale and practical approaches to enhancing sustainability in rice production, SRP is well-positioned to broker innovative stakeholder partnerships and consortia- the Sustainable Rice Landscapes Consortium (comprising SRP, UNEP, FAO, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, IRRI and GIZ) represents the first major example of such a scaling initiative.
3. **Serve as a knowledge hub:** SRP will leverage the collective experience and network of SRP and its members to enable learning from existing experiences in implementation, facilitate dialogue (especially South-South exchanges) with the aim of building awareness among stakeholders that will advance the sustainable rice agenda. The Knowledge Hub will include an online repository of training resources, access to authorized training service providers and an impact monitoring tool, linked to a system-wide ICT-based project database.

4.3 Three roles for SRP

The SRP Strategic Visioning Exercise conducted in 2018 reviewed a range of potential roles and entry points for SRP, connected to the organizational vision and mission and in keeping with its organizational capacity and trajectory. Based on this dialogue and subsequent discussions on institutional identity, the following three roles have emerged as appropriate and actionable, that will leverage SRP’s assets to achieve transformative change within the global rice sector:

1. Policy influencer
2. Scheme owner (SRP Standard, PIs and Assurance Scheme)
3. Convener / Project partner

The three roles are described below and summarized in Figure 4 below.

4.3.1 Policy influencer

National-level ownership and funding is a prerequisite to incentivizing long-term change to transform national rice sectors through alignment with national policy agendas, particularly on food and water security, farmer livelihoods and climate change / SDG commitments.

SRP will engage with governments, regional initiatives, as well as relevant UN and inter-governmental processes and financial institutions in mainstreaming the climate-smart sustainable rice agenda into regional and national policies. The strategic objective is to leverage inter-governmental and government partnerships to support evidence-based rice policy reform to establish sustainability goals within national policies in food, agriculture, environment and climate change, support governments in achieving their SDG and climate change targets, and to incentivize adoption of sustainable best practice by rice smallholders.

SRP will establish country-level coalitions (SRP National Chapters) in key countries, to be prioritized by the Executive Board with input as required from the wider SRP membership) under a protocol already established. National Chapters are mandated to represent SRP's interests at national level and to drive wide-scale adoption of climate-smart, sustainable best practice both through policy advocacy and through private sector value chains. SRP National Chapters will mirror the global body's principles and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach to ensure grassroots voices are heard.

National Chapters will maximize the opportunity for policymakers, other public sector actors and farmers to participate directly to advocate rice sector transformation, aligned with national goals and international obligations.

4.3.2 Scheme owner (SRP Standard, PIs and Assurance Scheme)

SRP launched its 'SRP-Verified' on-pack rice ecolabel and Assurance Scheme on 14 September 2020 to bring sustainable rice to consumers while helping smallholder farmers raise productivity and connect to stable and rewarding markets for quality rice and contributing to the SDGs. The ecolabel allows consumers to choose products that directly support efforts to increase farmer incomes and reduce the environmental impact of rice production. The ecolabel offers consumers a chance to catalyze real change, while enabling brands and retailers to lead from the front.

In addition to supporting sustainable procurement through third party verification, the three levels of assurance offered by the Scheme provide the flexibility to facilitate participation by small farmers where full verification is not required, or else not a feasible option.

The Scheme is based on the [SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation v 2.1](#), the world's first voluntary sustainability standard for rice. The Scheme provides a robust and credible framework to enable supply chain actors to de-risk their supply chains through audited evidence of compliance with the SRP Standard. It is underpinned by proven best practices as advocated by the International Rice Research Institute and provides a robust and transparent process to assess compliance and impact.

Developed via a process of consensus-building through multi-stakeholder consultation, the SRP Standard, Performance Indicators and Assurance Scheme define rules for actors engaged in measuring compliance or demonstrating improvements, providing demonstrable evidence of compliance with the SRP Standard and Performance Indicators and the use of SRP trademarks (Claims, Logos or Label) upon achieving assurance. The SRP Assurance Scheme focuses on verification, is built on a strong internal assessment and provides registration and self-assessment as a starting point. The SRP Assurance Scheme encourages innovative remote/landscape assessments, participatory schemes, individual producer assessments and producer group schemes using SRP's Internal Management System (IMS) Standard for producer groups.

This demand-side action targets the global rice trade as an essential complement to SRP's efforts to incentivize wide-scale farm-level adoption of climate-smart, sustainable best practice, as a contribution to a transformation of the global rice sector and to achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Key features of the Assurance Scheme are as follows:

- Managed in partnership with GLOBALG.A.P.
- Offers three levels of verification, with registration and self-assessment as a starting point to lower barriers to entry
- Focus on verification rather than certification (reduces costs)
- Encourages use of producer group internal control mechanisms using the SRP Internal Management System (IMS) Standard.
- Facilitates participation by small farmers who operate outside verified value chains.

Through its ownership of the Scheme, SRP can uphold brand value and the reputation of the SRP and its institutional members, exercise quality control through authorized training and integrity audits, and implement continuous improvement of the verification process. As owner of specific categories of aggregated data generated, SRP can build an evidence base that can be used to assess and report on impacts of adoption and inform future revisions of its normative documents. Finally, scheme ownership confers 'gate-keeper' rights (e.g. by providing reporting architecture to authenticate sustainable rice investments or other financial products/services).

SRP already offers authorized training services to SRP and external stakeholders undertaking relevant field projects to upscale adoption of the SRP Standard. To ensure quality and consistent content delivery, members may only engage SRP Authorized Trainers to deliver training as part of their SRP outreach programs. Currently, three institutions are authorized to deliver certificated SRP Training Course: the GIZ Academy for International Cooperation (AIZ), IRRI and GLOBALG.A.P.

4.3.3 Convener / Project partner

SRP already provides a pre-competitive platform for open dialogue and partnership building among its members as well as with external stakeholders. Effective scaling of adoption of SRP principles and tools through partnerships with development partners and multilateral initiatives is essential to scaling impact and sector transformation.

SRP was a founding member of an important global scaling consortium- the Sustainable Rice Landscapes (SRL) Consortium, through which SRP will participate in several large-scale country-level projects funded under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF). Participation in such projects helps to embed SRP principles as part of the Theory of Change for such project and build ownership among governmental partners that serve as Executing Agencies for such projects.

SRP's role as a project partner offers direct benefits in terms of project outcomes, while also building internal Secretariat capacity and strengthening SRP's status within the development community. As a nascent organization with new administrative and governance structures, establishing administrative compliance with donor requirements will be a prerequisite to fully participating in such projects. This task is also a priority under the DeveloPPP.de work programme.

In the private sector, SRP will strengthen its role in brokering partnerships among upstream and downstream partners and in leveraging public funding to support private sector investment in projects (and *vice-versa*) through private-public partnerships.

SRP's role as a repository of data and knowledge on SRP projects and practices adds to SRP's convening power. As of November 2020, SRP members in 21 countries have registered a total 25 SRP projects with the SRP Secretariat. All projects are currently active with durations ranging up to 2023. The SRP Secretariat also encourages SRP members to register their programs and expects the geographic coverage and target number of farmers to grow continuously with the launch of new programs and expansion of existing initiatives. This capacity and the value of data collected will be greatly strengthened through development of a cloud-based ICT data management system for SRP and its members with support from BMZ under the DeveloPPP.de initiative.

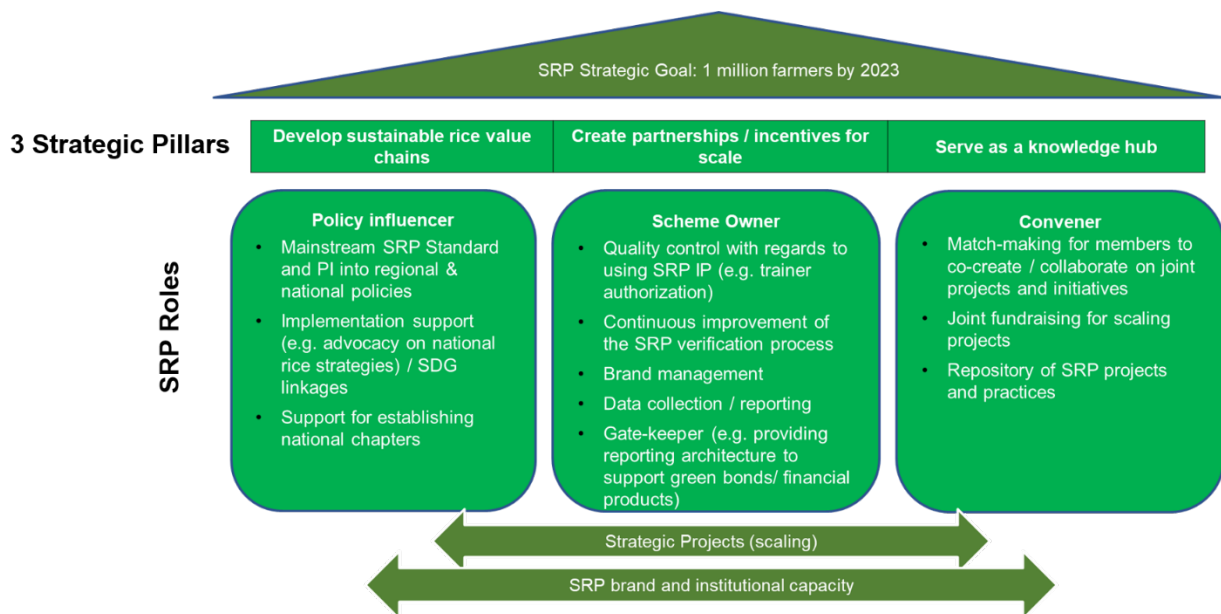


Figure 4: SRP roles and comparative advantage

These strategic roles for SRP can be operationalized through the Action Plan, comprising four parts:

1. **Strengthening SRP**, which refers to building the internal capacity of the Organization, from building the institutional framework and resource base, extending its partnerships and engaging with the membership and external global stakeholder community.
2. **Policy advocacy**, which refers to the first strategic role of SRP to transform the global rice sector through policy and advocacy interventions. It also incorporates establishment of SRP national chapters.
3. **Scheme management** refers to the second strategic role of the SRP as the Scheme Owner and presents a framework of action to ensure its efforts are relevant and applicable to drive the sustainable rice agenda. It also considers the utility of SRP tools as a basis for new services and new avenues for leverage (e.g. green bonds).
4. **Platform facilitation** sets out activities required to operationalize the third strategic role of SRP- that of convener and partner in scaling projects. It speaks about bringing together different actors along the value chain, enabling cooperation through strategic projects, as well as having systems in place to communicate their impact.

All activities are time-bound, with defined outcomes and responsible parties identified. These activities are designed to support the ambition and targets outlined in this plan. It is critical that these activities are aligned with activities under the DeveloPPP.de framework to ensure efficient and complementary use of resources.

5. Organizational capacity

5.1 New organizational structure

In order to reach scale and deliver on its global mission, an effective organizational structure is required, with enhanced human capacity in core domains that will enable the alliance to deploy high-level strategies and continue to support its members effectively. The SRP Organizational Chart is shown in Figure 5 below.

Organizational development and Secretariat capacity will be enhanced through the following four main areas of intervention:

- **Building a sustainable financial model.** Moving towards self-sufficient financing model requires a robust internal financial structure, build around targets and performance indicators, which would inform annual budgeting exercise, as well as other management decisions. This element of the action plan outlines activities, which need to be undertaken to support the transition towards a full-functioning, independent organization.
- **Strengthening governance:** this aspect mostly covers the need for ensuring continuity between changing Executive Boards, as well as have clear mandate for all task forces or committees, established by the Board. Stronger Board involvement is expected in overseeing the implementation of the DeveloPPP.de grant as well as participating in the design, financial acquisition and approval of the strategic projects.
- **Meeting member needs:** this element is important to secure the high member retention and recruitment rates, relevant to re-affirm the global, multi-stakeholder make-up of the organization, as well as maintain the income from membership dues. Work on revising the membership structure or introducing new benefits, based on demand is foreseen under this action line.
- **Strengthening Secretariat capacity:** as mentioned above, the Secretariat is undergoing restructuring under the DeveloPPP.de scheme. Several new positions are being introduced, and it is important to ensure that the skills and competences of the new staff support the transformation process under the Strategic Plan. The new organizational structure for SRP is presented in Figure 5 below.

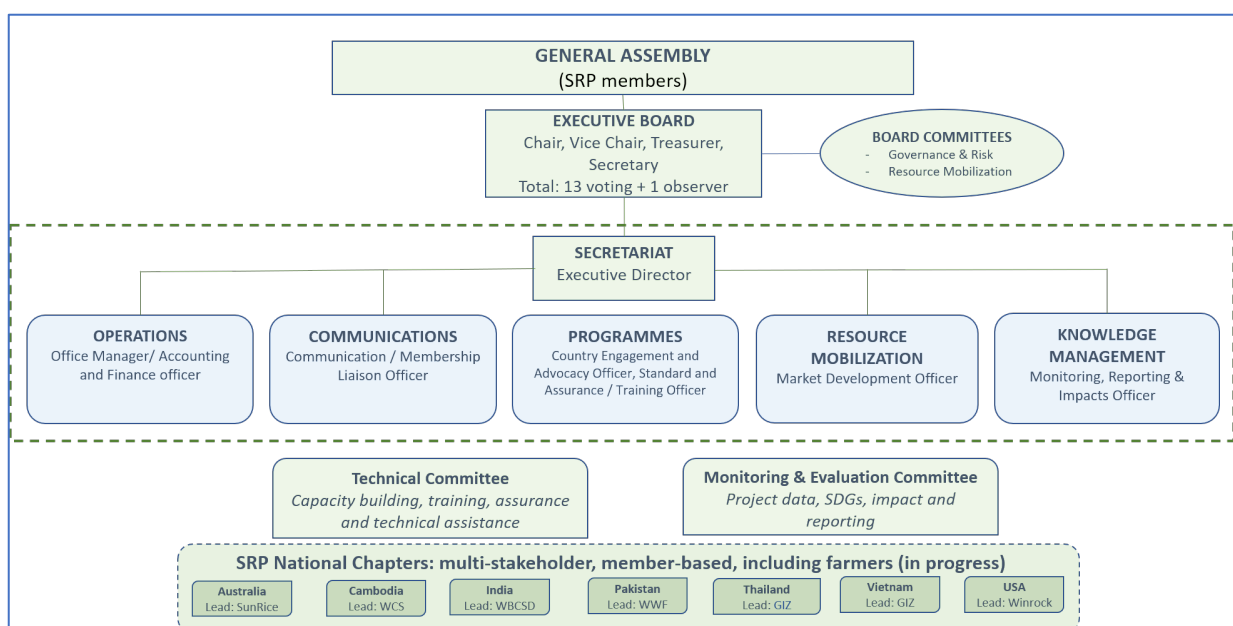


Figure 5: SRP Organizational Chart

Commencing from October 2020 to September 2023 SRP, receives support from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through GIZ and private sector partners (Ebro Foods, Mars Food and Olam International) under the DeveloPPP.de programme’s “Mainstreaming Sustainable Rice through the SRP” project. The project is designed to strengthen systems and tools of the SRP e.V. to scale the production and global marketing of sustainable rice, to foster the long-term stability and capacity of the SRP e.V. to support larger-scale action required for rice sector transformation.

The “Mainstreaming Sustainable Rice through the SRP” project will focus on delivering the following work packages and indicators (Figure 6).

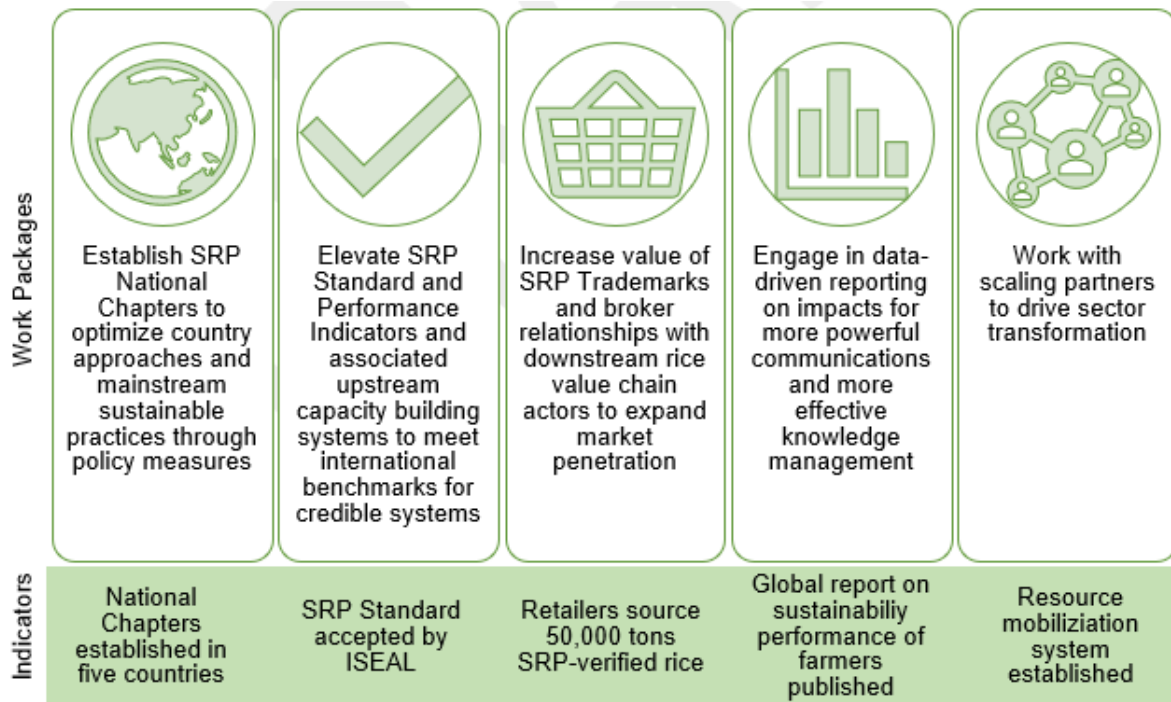


Figure 6: DeveloPPP.de project work packages to support the Secretariat

In addition, the DeveloPPP.de-supported project will also cover the following aspects of institutional capacity:

- Recruitment of staff to serve on the expanded Secretariat;
- Set up an independent office to house the expanded Secretariat and office systems;
- Strengthen the operationalization of SRP tools, including through quality assurance of training operators, linking training providers and project implementers, and training module revision and upgrade based on the needs;
- Strengthen branding and external communication, including to policymakers, value chain actors and consumers;
- Development of a management information system (MIS) for data collection and aggregation on projects and other activities, including for impact measurement and communication; and
- Supporting SRP e.V. to meet commercial eligibility criteria to access financing from donors.

While the support of DeveloPPP.de will facilitate SRP’s capacity, service delivery and organizational growth, the question of post-closure sustainability must be a focus under the Strategic Plan in order to maintain a desired level of operational capacity (including staffing) following the end of the grant period.

6. A business plan for SRP

6.1 SRP revenue streams

Since inception, SRP has been reliant on annual membership dues to maintain core Secretariat function, and on *ad hoc* contributions from corporate members for key programmes. While member dues will remain as a fundamentally important source of core income, broadening SRP's revenue base by diversifying revenue to operationalize three additional nascent revenue streams will contribute to financial stability and reduce risks. The Strategic Plan identifies three additional nascent revenue streams that can be developed and that are also scalable.

The four revenue streams envisaged are as follows:

1. **Annual membership dues**
2. **Authorized training scheme**
3. **Assurance Scheme (verification / royalty fees)**
4. **Grants for strategic scaling projects**

The four revenue streams differ in their respective risks, costs to implement, their scaling potential and lead time to secure return on investment and are summarized below.

Annual Membership Dues: SRP is a membership-based organization and members are required to pay fees for accessing its services. The SRP Membership Programme Manual sets out the requirements, benefits and commitments for SRP members, including annual membership dues. Dues are assessed according to four main categories, of related to the applicant's constituency and turnover. Membership dues are invoiced in Q1 of each year on a calendar year basis.

Public institutions and civil society organizations are exempt from membership dues. Currently, annual membership dues represent 95% of the total SRP annual budget; while membership renewals are stable and membership is expected to continue to grow by at least 10% p.a., dependency on a single income source presents clear risks. Moreover, organic growth in membership alone is not considered sufficient to generate the required growth in revenues to maintain significant Secretariat capacity and drive scale in its outreach programmes.

The key drivers for membership growth and retention are as follows:

- Tangible benefits for diverse membership constituencies: need to understand different needs of different types of members, while retaining the focus on the common goal.
- Well-documented and communicated impact of SRP programmes: focus on data collection and impact measurement.
- Opportunities for leveraging investments through partnerships with UN agencies, bilateral donors and multilateral mechanisms.
- SRP ability to bring together diverse stakeholders, establish an action-oriented dialogue, e.g. in establishing SRP national chapters.

SRP Authorized Training Scheme: SRP endorses eligible Training Providers to develop and deliver SRP Authorized Training Courses on SRP's behalf, to build a cadre of persons qualified to conduct certificated training for trainers, farmers and auditors in support of registered SRP Projects, SRP members and other SRP stakeholders, following the SRP Training System.

Under the current arrangement, SRP receives 25% of all training income (course fees) to cover its administrative and support costs. SRP will require one full time training officer to manage

development and updating of training curricula and collaterals, manage trainer and training records and ensure compliance by training providers with quality requirements.

The **SRP Assurance Scheme** defines rules for actors engaged in measuring compliance or demonstrating improvements, providing demonstrable evidence of compliance with the SRP Standard and Performance Indicators and the use of SRP trademarks (Claims, Logos or Label) upon achieving assurance. The SRP Assurance Scheme focuses on verification, is built on a strong internal assessment and provides registration and self-assessment as a starting point. The SRP Assurance Scheme encourages innovative remote/landscape assessments, participatory schemes, individual producer assessments and producer group schemes using Internal Management Systems (IMS).

While implementation may require adjustment following the pilot phase, the scheme is seen as an attractive instrument to build retailer and consumer confidence in sustainable supply chains. Including third-party verification as a component within strategic scaling projects (or e.g. as a requirement for accessing rice finance) will contribute to driving upstream scale at production level and market uptake among downstream actors. The plan proposes a target of 2.1% of total rice traded in international markets to be procured under the SRP Assurance Scheme by 2025, based on the current and anticipated scale of strategic scaling projects.

Strategic Scaling Projects (through grants and leveraging private sector finance): As a global multi-stakeholder platform, SRP offers proven practical tools and partnerships to address sustainability challenges facing rice smallholders. However, the global rice sector is fragmented and farmers frequently have limited or no access to credit, training or agricultural extension services. Such barriers to wide-scale adoption of climate-smart, sustainable best practice can only be overcome through large-scale strategic alliances bridging major stakeholder constituencies, unlocking private finance and public funding for implementation.

SRP is already attracting increasing interest and legitimacy as a viable project partner at bilateral and multilateral levels. Participation offers the following organizational benefits:

- Enables SRP to serve as a focal point to facilitate partnerships that match private sector investment and public funding in field projects through PPP mechanisms (towards which most donor policies are gravitating) that deliver matching public funding and help scale impact.
- Project grants enable hiring of external consultants as project staff to deliver project outputs on the institution's behalf and under its oversight. This helps expand the organization's implementation capacity and breadth of expertise and delivers benefits beyond the immediate project scope, without imposing undue burdens on core Secretariat staff.
- Strategic partnerships (e.g. relationships with donors and scaling partners): incorporation of SRP principles and tools (e.g. the SRP Standard, Performance Indicators, training and Assurance Scheme) into larger-scale long term programmes whose implementation is often government-led is a key requirement for long-term impact. For SRP, this can also contribute to revenue generation (e.g. through uptake of training and assurance), and aligns with the rationale for National Chapters as implementation partners.
- Creation of an institutional track record for SRP e.V. to support donor compliance requirements.
- Reputational benefits for project partners in the area of development, climate policy, food/water security and other domains.

- Making a real, lasting difference beyond the institution's own immediate sphere of influence.

Yet to participate in such initiatives requires considerable and continuing investment in Secretariat time and resources, and often a high level of uncertainty for a successful outcome. Crucially, participation is also predicated on administrative compliance with donor requirements. With such diversity in scale, project structure and complexity, theory of change, scope of intervention and overall contribution to SRP's scaling objectives, assessing project costs and benefits presents a range of challenges and require navigating issues beyond the immediate project risk:

- Objective and transparent guidelines for reviewing and endorsing SRP participation in large-scale projects that are strategic in nature, as well as in monitoring their implementation;
- To facilitate coherent data aggregation, synergies and learning by aligning projects methodologically, while retaining SRP's pre-competitive stance;
- Identification and avoidance of potential or actual conflict of interest among project partners;
- Avoidance of direct Secretariat engagement in implementation activities.

In keeping with general practice, scaling projects would allocate budgets for dedicated SRP project staff or consultants in order to avoid imposing any additional burden on existing Secretariat staff. This also has the benefit of extending the Secretariat's capacity and domain competencies.

Addressing these requirements and developing effective selection criteria for scaling projects will be an integral role under SRP governance processes and will contribute to strategic coherence, transparency and contribution to SRP's long-term goal. Annex 3 (Scaling Impact- Roles, Criteria and Modalities for SRP Participation in Grant Projects) sets out detailed rationale and procedures for endorsement of SRP participation in grant project proposals.

For each of the four revenue streams, assumptions, risks, revenue projections and anticipated costs are presented in Table 1 to Table 4 below, and summarized in Table 5.

Table 1: Revenue Stream 1 - Annual membership fees

Assumptions	Risks	Target 2021	Target 2025	Cost
<p>SRP membership will continue to grow at 10% p.a. (SRP membership is a prerequisite for all training and third-party verification providers).</p>	<p>Diverse member constituencies continue to see value in SRP membership.</p> <p>Requires continuous member engagement and analysis of membership needs, perceptions, as well as new services and benefits of membership benefits.</p>	<p>Membership growth by 2021 at least 10% p.a. or to € 418,000.</p>	<p>Target revenue €612,000</p> <p>Reduced share of membership dues as % of total budget from 90% in 2020 to 55% in 2022 and 39% in 2025.</p>	<p>Secretariat time (ED 10%, Communication and Membership Liaison Officer 50%, Office Manager 25%)</p>

Table 2: Revenue Stream 2 - Authorized Training Scheme

Assumptions	Risks	Target 2021	Target 2025	Cost
<p>Training is outsourced to authorized SRP Training Providers</p> <p>Growing demand for training in tandem with market uptake</p> <p>Average course fees: €625 p.p (Assurance Scheme training) and €750 p.p. (Standard and Indicators training)</p> <p>SRP recovers a 25% share of training revenues from authorized training providers</p> <p>1 FTE (Training officer) at Secretariat allocated to oversight</p>	<p>Reputational risk (upholding quality of training delivery, violations)</p> <p>Ensuring local relevance</p>	<p>Standard² and Indicators training in 2021: 4 x €750* p.p. x 15 x 0.25 = €11,250</p> <p>Assurance scheme training in 2021: 2 x €625 x 15 x 0.25 = €3,750</p>	<p>Standard and Indicators training in 2025: 20 €750 x 15 p. * 0.25 = €56,250</p> <p>Assurance Scheme training in 2025: 3 x € 625 * 15 p. * 0.25 = €7,031</p>	<p>1 full-time equivalent (FTE) hired under DeveloPPP.de to administer the training system within SRP</p>

² Calculation: Training courses usually bring together up to 15 trainees.

Table 3: Revenue Stream 3 - Assurance Scheme

Assumptions	Risks	Target 2021	Target 2025	Cost
<p>Retailers adopt the Assurance Scheme as part of their sustainable procurement policies</p> <p>Consumers see value in SRP-Verified rice, translating into WTP</p> <p>Backed by a credible evidence base to support impact evaluation and communication of claims</p>	<p>Risk of market acceptance / perception of cost-effectiveness</p> <p>Rejection of GG farm registration fee by market actors.</p>	<p>2020/ 21: 50,000 ha x € 0.5 = €25,000</p>	<p>2024/25: 350,000 ha * €0,5³ = €175,000 p.a. *representing 2.1 % of globally traded rice) volume of 50mt</p> <p>350,000ha x 3t/ha = 1.05mt 1.05/50mt = 2.1% of globally traded volume</p>	<p>Implementation costs covered by GLOBALGAP which recovers costs through registration, training and assurance fees.</p> <p>Additional costs to SRP anticipated for label management and Chain of Custody Standard management.</p>

Table 4: Revenue Stream 4 - Strategic scaling projects (grants)

Assumptions	Risks	Target 2021	Target 2025	Cost
<p>SRP e.V. achieves administrative compliance with donor requirements</p> <p>15% margin on SRP resources allocated to grant-funded projects</p>	<p>Project design and budget plan embraces SRP principles in face of competing partner agendas</p> <p>Long lead time and increased risk for securing large scale projects (compared with bilaterals).</p>	<p>2020/21: No new revenues expected due to lead time for project design and development</p>	<p>Minimum € 500,000 p.a. by 2025 in project budget allocations to be channeled via SRP e.V., either for direct delivery by SRP (e.g. via consultants) or via SRP National Chapters.</p>	<p>Secretariat and Board time in project screening, design, bidding and oversight of implementation</p> <p>SRP inputs to project implementation will be subject to full cost recovery from project budget, with 15% margin on overheads.</p>

³ As per agreement with GLOBALG.A.P., SRP receives € 0.5 fee per hectare of land under SRP verification.

6.2 Long-term financial sustainability

The SRP Secretariat's elevated capacity and resources will be supported under the DeveloPPP.de programme funded by the German government, together with support from private sector partners (Ebro, Mars Food, Olam International). At project closure in 2023, the transition from a grant-funded to self-sufficient model will require either reducing costs (and possibly services) or increasing revenues. If SRP aims to continue to maintain the level of administrative support to be provided under the DeveloPPP.de project, an estimated €300,000 in additional annual revenues will be required starting from 2023. A review of needs will be conducted annually to assess post-project capacity and resource requirements.

A strong exit strategy following closure of the DeveloPPP.de is therefore an urgent priority. The strategy may require building up a cash reserve, allocating all revenues earned to sustain the transition post-grant. However, such an arrangement would require legal clarification as the German tax authorities to ensure compliance with tax-exemption status. Strategic lean budgeting and managing SRP as a business will therefore be critical to long-term organizational sustainability as well as to avoiding over-dependence on single donors or revenue sources.

6.3 Income 2021-2025

Currently, SRP generates 95% of its income from annual membership fees contributed by private sector members. These committed companies support the SRP activities voluntarily. While membership fees will continue to represent a vital revenue stream by 2025, it is anticipated the Strategic Plan will work to increase the share of additional nascent revenue streams. This is considered a reasonable expectation in view of growing stakeholder interest in SRP, particularly reflected in intensifying dialogue with development banks, financial actors, donor agencies and retailers. Under the Strategic Plan, SRP will diversify income streams to broaden and de-risk its revenue base, as shown in Figure 7 below.

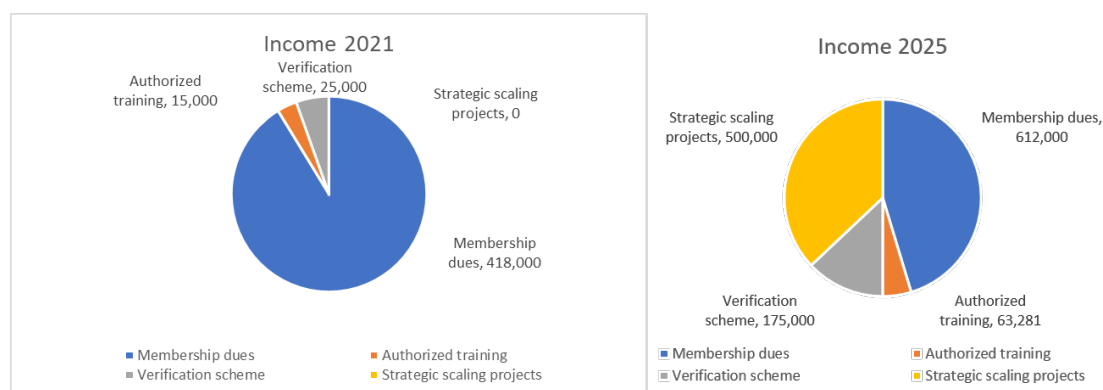


Figure 7: Income projection 2021-2025

Table 5 below summarizes income targets for the four identified revenue streams for 2021 and 2025.

Table 5: Income streams 2021-2025

Income Stream	Target 2021 (€)	Target 2025 (€)
Membership dues	418,000	612,000
Authorized Training Scheme	15,000	63,281
Verification Scheme	25,000	175,000
Grants for strategic scaling projects	-	500,000
Total (€)	458,000	1,350,281

Moreover, it is expected that the emerging market awareness of the SRP brand and the Assurance Scheme as well as recognition among development actors of the criticality of rice as a driver of global food security will add to a growing relevance for SRP in diverse roles and modalities.

A modest, stable and growing revenue stream is expected to emerge from the training and verification schemes. However, both schemes will require significant ongoing maintenance costs for the SRP Secretariat in updating courses, managing compliance and developing innovative approaches to inherent challenges in both training and verification. Therefore, training system costs and resources will need to be prioritized post-closure of DeveloPPP.de.

6.4 Implementation costs

Projected costs are presented in Table 6 below. Under these assumptions, by 2025 the team will be fully staffed and budgeted. It is also expected that current office rental costs can continue to be covered post-grant. Expenditure on programmes will be adjusted based on available budget and

operational need. While cost estimates for 2025 are subject to significant uncertainty, the table provides the key assumptions for planning. The plan is based on three principles:

- Costs to be adjusted to anticipated revenues; income targets need to be reviewed on a regular basis and adjusted according to internal and external factors.
- The plan aims at ensuring a specific net operating surplus at the end of each financial year to overcome short term cashflow shortfalls e.g. delays in dues payments or slower market uptake of services such as assurance or training.
- Full costing is required for all activities to ensure SRP management is aware of the real effort, resource allocation and cost of delivery across various projects and services offered. Staff timesheets should be maintained for all staff in order to document time allocation.

Table 6: Costs and assumptions







Category	2021 cost (€)	2025 cost (€)	Assumptions
Staff	194,814	283,000	Six staff with salary range of 2,200 – 4,000 per month. Initial plan is that SRP will take on 50% of staff costs in Year 3 of the DeveloPPP.de project toward transition, which can be covered through strategic projects and other revenue streams.
Consultants	95,000		Not estimated as needs will vary (e.g., short term experts, design/ communications, legal/tax).
Office rental	14,000	41,600	Est. 3,150 monthly rent + 10% increase (excludes bills)
Misc. operating costs	33,186	10,000	Not estimated as needs will vary (e.g., IT support, licenses, rentals, supplies).
Travel	30,000	-	Not estimated as needs will vary. 2021 will likely see less cost on travel due to moving events online.
Meetings, workshops, conferences, exhibits	30,000	-	Not estimated as needs will vary
ISEAL membership	N/A	4,600	Annual fee
Total	397,400		
Income	458,000	1,350,281	Excludes DeveloPPP.de grant.
Net operating profit	60,600	At least €300,000 as a buffer	

A summary of the business model presented in this section of the document is presented in Annex 2: SRP Business Model Canvas.

Annex 1: Summary of SRP Strategic Plan

SRP Strategic Plan: From Vision to Field									
FUTURE STATE	VISION: Feed the World. Sustainably								
BUSINESS OBJECTIVES	MISSION: Transform the global rice sector								
QUANTITATIVE TARGET	GOAL: Goal: 1 million rice smallholders adopting climate-smart, sustainable best practice by 2023, 10 million by 2030								
STRATEGIC PILLARS	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; background-color: #008000; color: white;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Develop sustainable rice value chains</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Create partnerships and incentives for scale</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Serve as a knowledge hub</td> </tr> </table>	Develop sustainable rice value chains	Create partnerships and incentives for scale	Serve as a knowledge hub					
Develop sustainable rice value chains	Create partnerships and incentives for scale	Serve as a knowledge hub							
REVENUE STREAMS (2021/2025)	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Membership fees EUR 418,000/ 612,000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Training Assurance EUR 15,000 / 63,000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">SRP Verification EUR 25,000/ 175,000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Strategic Projects EUR 0/ 500,000</td> </tr> </table>	Membership fees EUR 418,000/ 612,000	Training Assurance EUR 15,000 / 63,000	SRP Verification EUR 25,000/ 175,000	Strategic Projects EUR 0/ 500,000				
Membership fees EUR 418,000/ 612,000	Training Assurance EUR 15,000 / 63,000	SRP Verification EUR 25,000/ 175,000	Strategic Projects EUR 0/ 500,000						
NON-REVENUE ACTIVITIES	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;">SRP INTERNAL REVENUES : From EUR 458,000 (2021) to EUR 1,350,281 (2025)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Policy advocacy</td> <td style="text-align: center;">National Chapters</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Partnerships to upscale impact</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Knowledge management</td> </tr> </table>	SRP INTERNAL REVENUES : From EUR 458,000 (2021) to EUR 1,350,281 (2025)				Policy advocacy	National Chapters	Partnerships to upscale impact	Knowledge management
SRP INTERNAL REVENUES : From EUR 458,000 (2021) to EUR 1,350,281 (2025)									
Policy advocacy	National Chapters	Partnerships to upscale impact	Knowledge management						
VALUE PROPOSITION	Delivering SERVICES – Convening PARTNERSHIPS – Leveraging IMPACTS								
<p>CAPACITY BUILDING BY SECRETARIAT (DeveloPPP.de)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SRP National Chapters 2. Development and management of normative tools (Standard, Pis) 3. Brand value/market penetration 4. Data platform and knowledge management 5. Leverage strategic scaling partners 	<p>EXTERNAL LEVERAGE (Scale partners incl UN agencies, multilateral organizations):</p> <p>To reach 1 million farmers would require on average EUR 100/ farmers in direct and indirect costs. Cost associated with direct support through trainings or verification can on average be 5%. We can assume that at least of 10% of that amount goes to SRP directly, estimated at a minimum EUR 500,000 by Y5. SRP can play a more pivotal role, e.g. of a gatekeeper to facilitate access to green finance.</p>								

Annex 2: SRP Business Model Canvas

<p>Key Partners </p> <p>Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governments ▪ Rice value chain actors ▪ Service providers ▪ NGOs <p>Enablers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Certification agencies (e.g., Global GAP) ▪ Banking institutions (e.g. setting-up green finance scheme) ▪ Training providers ▪ Consultancies (e.g. app developers) 	<p>Key Products (revenue streams) and opportunities </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SRP Membership Fees ▪ SRP Verification Scheme ▪ SRP Authorised Training Scheme ▪ SRP Strategic Projects ▪ Other (Conferences and events) 	<p>Value Proposition </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry standard setter • SRP IP holder • Project repository • Platform convener/ matchmaker: matching partners, services • Quality assurance of training content/ training provision • SRP Verification system co-owner • Fundraiser for rice sustainability programs • Policy influencer: global to local • Impact communicator – how to explain impact of SRP standard implementation on farmer livelihoods? 	<p>Customer Relationships </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governments: long-term, advisory • Rice value chain actors: long-term, responsive, cocreation • Service providers: quality assurance; transactional ▪ Development partners/ NGOs: long-term, co-creation ▪ Consumers: community, demonstrating impact 	<p>Customer Segments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governments: policy advice, technical support • Rice value chain actors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Producers: industry standard and guidelines for implementation (PI), training support, verification; ○ Traders: industry standard, sustainability and verification, communication; ○ Consumers: industry standard (quality), sustainability, impact • Service providers: quality assurance; market development for services ▪ Development partners/ NGOs: joint project design and fundraising;
<p>Cost Structure </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff ▪ Services (consultants) ▪ Rentals ▪ IT ▪ Communications (including events) 	<p>Revenue Streams </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SRP Membership Fees – based on the type/ scale of the value chain actor ▪ SRP Verification Scheme (profit-sharing) ▪ SRP Authorised Training Authorisation Scheme (profit-sharing) ▪ SRP Strategic Projects: Offering SRP IP and support under the projects (e.g. introducing verification component, linking with authorised service providers; Technical support in project implementation – e.g. working on joint communication. 			

Annex 3: Upscaling impact: Roles, criteria and modalities for SRP participation in grant projects

1. Purpose of this document

- 1.1. SRP's participation in donor-funded development projects represents an integral pillar of the SRP Strategic Plan. Such projects carry critical strategic importance to SRP's scaling objectives and to achieving sector transformation, and SRP is attracting increasing interest and legitimacy as a viable project partner at bilateral and multilateral levels (GEF, World Bank).
- 1.2. Yet to participate in such initiatives often requires considerable and continuing investment in ensuring administrative compliance, in Secretariat time and resources in proposal development, and often a high level of uncertainty for a successful outcome. With a diversity in scale, project structure and complexity, theory of change, scope of intervention and contribution to SRP's scaling objectives, assessing SRP's participation require navigating issues beyond the immediate project risk.
- 1.3. This document proposes criteria and procedures to assess viability and prioritize SRP's engagement in grant-funded projects. The aims of these criteria are fourfold:
 - To guide the Secretariat in designing project proposals to maximize contribution to SRP goals and meet agreed institutional criteria;
 - To provide the Executive Board with objective and transparent guidelines for reviewing and endorsing SRP participation in large-scale projects from a risk-benefit perspective, as well as in monitoring their implementation;
 - To facilitate coherent data aggregation, synergies and learning by aligning projects methodologically, while retaining SRP's pre-competitive stance;
 - Identification and avoidance of potential or actual conflict of interest among project partners.
- 1.4. These criteria will contribute to strategic coherence and accomplishment of SRP's goals and are essential components of SRP's overall governance. This is particularly important in order to ensure that SRP remains focused and independent, and avoids being donor-driven.
- 1.5. These criteria complement donor-specified safeguard and risk management evaluation criteria.

2. Why SRP should participate in implementing grant projects

- 2.1. Institutions participate in bilateral and multilateral calls for proposals for development projects for a number of reasons, including the following:
 - Enables SRP to serve as a focal point to facilitate partnerships that match private sector investment and public funding in field projects through PPP mechanisms (towards which most donor policies are gravitating) that deliver matching public funding and help scale impact.
 - Project grants enable hiring of external consultants as project staff to deliver project outputs on the institution's behalf and under its oversight. This helps expand the

organization's implementation capacity and breadth of expertise and delivers benefits beyond the immediate project scope, without imposing undue burdens on core Secretariat staff.

- Strategic partnerships (e.g. relationships with donors and scaling partners): incorporation of SRP principles and tools (e.g. the SRP Standard, Performance Indicators, training and Assurance Scheme) into larger-scale long term programmes whose implementation is often government-led is a key requirement for long-term impact. For SRP, this can also contribute to revenue generation (e.g. through uptake of training and assurance), and aligns with the rationale for National Chapters as implementation partners.
- Creation of an institutional track record for SRP e.V. to support donor compliance requirements.
- Reputational benefits for project partners in the area of development, climate policy, food/water security and other domains.
- Making a real, lasting difference beyond the institution's own immediate sphere of influence.

3. Modality of Participation

- 3.1. Recognizing the value of participation in scaling projects, how might SRP ensure that future initiatives directly support the finances of SRP e.V., rather than make intangible, discretionary and sometimes even imaginary 'in-kind' contributions? How might such projects help SRP e.V. build its capacity to participate in scaling projects that contribute to our transformative agenda, while maintaining SRP's independence, impartiality and integrity?
- 3.2. Institutions may participate in projects at several levels, as a Project Partner, Contractor, Service Provider or through external individual consultants.
 - Second existing staff to projects (with salary costs/overheads budgeted pro rata based on person-days)
 - Employ new staff or consultants for the duration of the project (also covered by project budget allocations).
- 3.3. The latter model is generally favoured since it imposes no additional burden on existing staff; for SRP it has the following additional advantages:
 - Extends Secretariat capacity and domain competencies, to the extent that project staff are able to contribute to core Secretariat activities beyond the immediate project scope
 - Enhances SRP's delivery capacity, impact and visibility
 - Generates income for SRP e.V. via overhead fees and pass-through funds.
- 3.4. For SRP it is important that projects should not impose a significant burden that would stretch the Secretariat's limited capacity to deliver. Involvement of regular Secretariat staff in country-level projects should therefore be limited to proposal screening, development and oversight of implementation.

4. Selection Criteria - General

- 4.1. The project must be strategic in nature (e.g. contribute to longer-term strategic alliances with scale partners or donors)
- 4.2. Project Concept Note must articulate its scaling objectives and impact targets
- 4.3. Project must fulfil general development criteria set by the donor (e.g. impact, attribution, cost-benefit, Theory of Change, co-benefits, exit strategy and long-term post-closure sustainability of outcomes etc.
- 4.4. Project risks (partners, country, financial and sector risk) must be defined and justified with mitigation measures.

5. Criteria: SRP-specific

- 5.1. SRP's principles and tools must be incorporated as part of the project's Theory of Change and contribute to scaling of adoption of the SRP Standard and other tools such as Authorized Training, Assurance, opportunities to expand sourcing and offtake agreements, and innovative linkages with financial products as applicable (e.g. crop insurance at micro-level, and large-scale financial instruments at macro- level).
- 5.2. SRP e.V. must participate as a legal entity, as either a Partner, Contractor or Service Provider in the project, with clear designation of roles and minimum budget allocation of \$100,000, to be channeled via SRP e.V. (excluding any in-kind contributions)
- 5.3. Project funds allocated to SRP activities (including those assigned to National Chapters) must be channeled via SRP e.V.
- 5.4. In-kind support by project partners (e.g. for capacity building) to be pre-agreed and breakdown provided at Concept Note level.
- 5.5. SRP inputs to be delivered by consultants / project staff hired by SRP e.V. using project funds under the oversight of the SRP Secretariat and/or Technical Committee. Secretariat staff must not be directly involved in project implementation, except as a member of Project oversight / Steering Committees.
- 5.6. A standard management overhead of 15% on SRP person-days shall be applied for all SRP project inputs.
- 5.7. Conflict of interest assessment to be conducted to protect SRP's pre-competitive, impartial stance.
- 5.8. To ensure transparency, all SRP members must be made aware of such project proposals at an early stage, and offered the opportunity to participate, subject to respective donor criteria and project requirements.
- 5.9. Projects must facilitate data sharing to build evidence base for impact of SRP adoption.

6. Potential roles of SRP within implementation projects

- 6.1. Directly and through its Secretariat, National Chapters, consultants and membership, SRP can potentially offer the following services as inputs to development projects:

- 1 Provide guidance, training and technical assistance for upscaling of adoption of environmentally and socially sustainable, climate-smart rice production technologies under the SRP Standard and Performance Indicators, and to extension services, implementation partners and farmers, contributing to NDC commitments and supporting farm-level strategies for mitigation of GHG emissions as well as macro-level strategies to enhance resilience of rice production systems to climate change impacts.
- 2 Value chain development: linking farmers to markets for sustainable rice through the SRP Assurance Scheme for rice smallholders based on the SRP Standard.
- 3 Contribute to development of rice policy measures to incentivize adoption of climate-smart sustainable best practice among smallholders, including landscape-level approaches.
- 4 Provide common frameworks for M&E to monitor SRP adoption and its impact, including local impacts on productivity, water consumption/quality, soil conditions, biodiversity and ecosystem services, based on the SRP Performance Indicators.
- 5 Support institutional development for national-level commitment to embed the principles of sustainable rice production in policy and practice, through the support of national-level rice stakeholders from research, public and private sectors as well as civil society and the development community (e.g. through SRP National Chapters and development of National Interpretation Guidelines).
- 6 Serve to anchor public-private partnerships as a basis for bilateral and multilateral donors at both small and large scales.
- 7 Serve to authenticate green investments in rice.
- 8 Promote collateralization of the SRP Standard as a means of complementing and de-risking financial services e.g. credit and crop insurance.

7. Endorsement of Secretariat-initiated projects

- 7.1. In view of the institutional mix of companies, universities, state and non-government actors collaborating under the SRP umbrella, there is a clear need for consensus on principles of engagement between direct contracting parties as well as their relationship with the SRP, in its role as overall facilitator or project partner.
- 7.2. Broad and open public dissemination of SRP outcomes and recommendations will be essential to underpin SRP's leadership role in advocacy whilst also recognizing the legitimate interests and existing policies of members and sponsors of research.
- 7.3. Nevertheless, the wide diversity in organizational form and institutional perspective among SRP members and institutional funding bodies highlights the need to maintain coherence and alignment, particularly where collaborative activities take place outside the direct governance structure of the SRP.
- 7.4. The Executive Board needs to exercise strategic oversight over such scaling projects. While it would be burdensome to require Board endorsement of all Concept Notes and proposals, these should be nevertheless be reviewed within the mandate of the Technical Committee. Only donor-approved concept notes should require Board endorsement. Nevertheless, the

Secretariat must keep the Executive Board informed of all Concept Notes either via regular Board meetings, or via email for time-sensitive calls for proposals.

8. Endorsement of member-driven projects

- 8.1. SRP members are encouraged to develop proposals and seek funding for projects that contribute to SRP's goals and objectives. Such proposals may be endorsed by the SRP at its discretion, provided they contribute to SRP goals and comply with SRP endorsement criteria.
- 8.2. Applicants should submit an early-stage Concept Note to the Secretariat/Technical Committee, which will evaluate each request and grant in-principle approval for the proponent to submit the CN to the donor.
- 8.3. Following donor approval the applicant will develop a full proposal, to be submitted via the Secretariat/Technical Committee, which will either forward to the Executive Board for endorsement, or return to the proponent with a request for resubmission.
- 8.4. The Executive Board will make the final endorsement decision. The Secretariat is responsible for communicating the decision and justification to the proponent. In case of refusal, members have the right to appeal, revise and re-submit the proposal.
- 8.5. Proponents have the right to request a restricted circulation of Concept Notes while the Call for Proposals remains open.
- 8.6. The SRP membership will be notified of proposals received for consideration, with an invitation to comment. The membership will also be informed of the outcome.

